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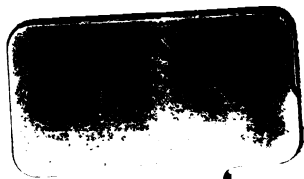
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THE
CHURCHMAN IN DEATH

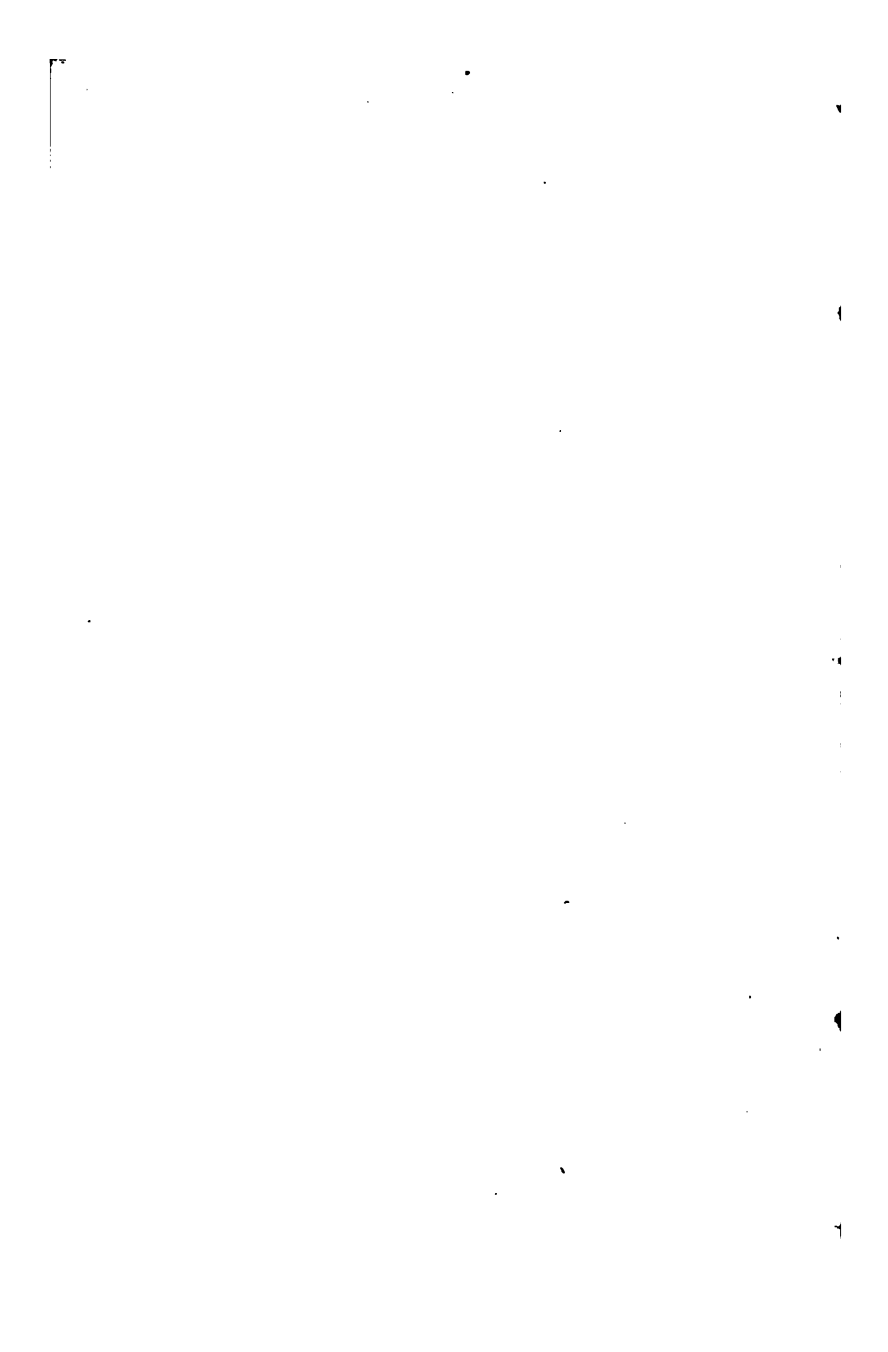
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47. 679.



The Churchman in Death.



The Churchman in Death ;

AS EXEMPLIFIED IN

A LETTER

ADDRESSED TO THE PARISHIONERS OF WESTBURY,

UPON THE

Death of their Vicar,

STAFFORD BROWN, M.A.,

WHO FELL ASLEEP IN JESUS, MAY 10, 1847.

BY HIS ONLY BROTHER,

MEREDITH BROWN, B.A.,

CURATE OF CHITTOE.

Second Edition,
WITH SOME ADDITIONS.

LONDON :

F. AND J. RIVINGTON.

BATH: SIMMS AND SON, GEORGE STREET.

1847.



Printers

To the Memory

OF

MY "BROTHER BELOVED,"

"BOTH IN THE FLESH AND IN THE LORD,"*

I DESIRE TO DEDICATE

THESE PAGES.

*** Philemon 16.**

A LETTER, &c.

RIGHT DEAR IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD IS THE DEATH OF
HIS SAINTS. — Ps. cxvi. 13.

O COME HITHER AND HEARKEN ALL YE THAT FEAR GOD, AND
I WILL TELL YOU WHAT HE HATH DONE FOR MY SOUL.
— Ps. lxvi. 14.

MY DEAR BRETHREN,

I take the liberty of addressing you publicly upon the occasion of the death of your much lamented Vicar, partly as an offering and tribute of brotherly affection to his memory, and partly in the hope of supplying you, and your children, with a memorial of a pastor who has bestowed and received so much love amongst you. Mr. Fane's eloquent and striking sermon,* indeed, altogether prevents the *necessity* of such an address on my part; but I have thought

* I am happy to hear that Mr. Fane has consented to publish his sermon.

that, considering the nearness of my connexion with him who is taken, and my presence with him during his last hours, a few words from me also might not prove unacceptable.

It is not my purpose to discuss his character generally, or as it was particularly exhibited in his ministerial work amongst you. It would, perhaps, not be decorous in a brother to speak in detail on such subjects, and moreover, I gladly abstain from them, because they have been ably and delicately handled by Mr. Fane. I purpose to confine myself to the last hours of your Vicar's life, and any allusions to former times will be introduced only as helping to illustrate and confirm the circumstances of his close. And, as regards this short period, you will not, I am sure, look for a record of *all* that fell from the lips of my beloved brother. Much was necessarily of a private and confidential nature, and to part, of course, no sort of public importance is to be attached. And again, this sudden and violent storm of grief has swept many of his precious words from my memory; but others, and those, doubtless, the most striking and important, sunk beyond the reach of its violence, and so are most vividly retained. Of

this class I think many were uttered by your Vicar ; uttered too, remember, with all the solemnity, emphasis, and, in this case it may be added, with all the studied accuracy of a consciously dying man, which will possess a peculiarly deep value to you, the members of his flock, and not be devoid of interest to others. I will endeavour to make such a faithful and ungarnished selection of his words as may not disappoint this hope ; and I may add that there were other eye and ear witnesses present on this sad occasion, who can abundantly testify to the truth of my report. And, as adding weight to the evidence about to be given, I would further observe, that my dear brother was blest to the very last, not only with the most perfect calmness and composure of soul, but also with the possession of his mental faculties, which were as ready, as acute and vigorous, as I had ever known them.

For the sake of the convenience of a plan by which to assort the materials, and as the one suggesting itself bears especial and important reference to the present circumstances of religion, I propose to lay before you my beloved brother's views and experience with particular

regard to the distinctive doctrine or teaching of the English Church.

I need hardly tell you who have had, day by day, before you the living testimony of his words and his works, of his devoted attachment and scrupulous obedience, under submission to the wishes of his revered Bishop and other Ecclesiastical Superiors, to the expressed mind of that Church of which he was, as he himself thought a most unworthy, but as others judged a most faithful and zealous, minister. He lived, ministered, and died, in the English Church; not *only* from the providential circumstance of birth and education within her honoured pale, though for this he was ever most thankful, but also because, with careful investigation of her claims to evangelical truth and apostolical order, and blessed experience of "the heavenly gift" contained in her, he was from first to last immovably convinced that, if I may so speak, where the *Providence* of God had placed him, there also the *Grace* of God would have him to be, and to continue even unto the end.

This rooted and grounded persuasion imparted a very distinct, and ever-deepening colour, to all his views.

To his mind the only adequate and perfect idea of Christianity, or the Gospel, or true saving religion, was THE CHURCH OF CHRIST; whose faith is the doctrine revealed in Holy Scripture, condensed in the three antient creeds, and, in our case, in some points amplified and guarded in the Thirty-nine Articles; whose grace for the regeneration, justification, and salvation of its believing members, is ordinarily dispensed, by Christ her Head, through the *divine* agency of His Holy Spirit, and through the *human* agency of His ministry of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, in their right performance of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the sacramental ordinances of Confirmation, Absolution, Preaching, and Prayer. Any thing short of this was to him defect and imperfection; anything beyond it, will-worship and superstition.

Thus, then, he laboured, with a zeal tempered by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, to carry out in himself, and to recommend to the hearty acceptance of others, the whole doctrinal and practical system of the English Church. With the Bible in one hand, and the Prayer Book in the other, — the word of God in the

right, and that of His Church in the left, — he endeavoured to minister to his flock, as each had need, the word and means of salvation : with what fruit, you, brethren, know in part now, and you shall know perfectly hereafter. But observe, and pardon me if I am tedious here or elsewhere in repeating, what I desire earnestly to press upon you is this, that your Pastor recognized no *perfection* of religion apart from full communion with the Church ; by which I mean the constant, spiritual, and fruitful use of her Scriptures, her Ministry, her Sacraments, and her Prayers. He indeed was, as you well know, the last man to judge and condemn, acrimoniously to oppose, or proudly to keep aloof from “them that are without” the Church. I appeal to *all* who dwell in Westbury, and ask them : Was he not to *all* “gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children ?” (1 Thess. ii. 7.) Did he not, considering the firmness and consistency of his attachment to the Church, wonderfully obey the precept of the apostle, that “the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves ?” (2 Tim. ii. 24, 25.) But

though, in tenderness of dealing and charity of judgment, "he was made all things to all men, that he might by all means save some;" yet never would he sacrifice and abandon, no, nor conceal and explain away, what he believed to be a vital part of "the truth as it is in Jesus." He was in mind and conscience convinced that the ever blessed Trinity has been pleased to institute and appoint, as the way and means of man's salvation, that one visible body, society and kingdom, which is called *The Church*; in which the doctrines of the gospel are to be believed, its duties performed, its spiritual affections exercised, and its unspeakable gifts and privileges enjoyed. Thus firmly holding that the Church is no work of man's, but the creation and appointment of God for his salvation, — the visible casket in which the unsearchable riches of Christ are treasured, — he was, of course, bound to represent union with her an essential duty and infinite blessing, unintentional separation a danger, wilful departure and hostility a sin.

Yet, on the other hand, none was more firm and decided in his repudiation of and aversion to the corrupt doctrines and practices of the

Church of Rome. But, then, he did not regard *any thing* in his Prayer Book as Romish ; for he believed that the wisdom of the whole of its contents was fully justified by the concurrent voices of Scripture, antiquity, and the reason and conscience of the most enlightened Christians.

Such was the firm and distinctive attachment of your beloved Vicar to the English Church during his life ; such too was it in death, as, with your permission, I will now proceed to show.

And first, I would remark upon his prominent use, and deep appreciation of, those doctrines, and doctrinal considerations, which are commonly termed evangelical. Without meaning to give a definition which in all respects will challenge strict accuracy, I suppose all would allow, that the views in question refer mainly, to the blessed grounds of hope and consolation which the gospel so abundantly supplies, to those who *have been* even the chief of sinners, in the astonishing fact that the Son of God and very God has become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, for us men and for our salvation.

It is not unusual to regard these views as

having no place, or at least no prominent and adequate place, in the faith and piety of those who desire to be and to be thought zealous and consistent churchmen. None, indeed, could so think, who, studying our Prayer Book with carefulness and candour, and comparing its contents with the word of God, would seek its fair interpretation in the lives and writings of such men as Richard Hooker, and Bishops Andrewes and Ken. Acquaintance with my beloved brother, in his life and in his death, would also tend to disabuse the mind of any such erroneous notion. As regards his lifetime you are witnesses, brethren, how without ceasing, in season and out of season, in his public exhortations and in his private converse, as well as in the books and tracts which he distributed, he was "determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified," (1 Cor. ii. 2,) "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins, ... that he might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Rom. iii. 25, 26.)

To his own personal use of this vital and fundamental doctrine of the gospel in his hour of

death I can testify. Almost immediately upon his being assured of its speedy approach he exclaimed several times, and most emphatically, and as if in the full assurance of faith, "I am Christ's, and Christ is God's." And then, as setting forth what is of course the only true meaning of these words, he proceeded to utter a most distinct declaration, that the one only meritorious ground of salvation on which he rested, was the application* to his sinful soul of the infinitely precious life and death of his adorable Redeemer. Many other exclamations and prayers did he utter, most unequivocally renouncing *merit* in himself, and implying entire dependence upon the merits of the Son of God. I will only quote one more, and I select it because it will be recorded, and remain amongst you for you and for your children to read, as an abiding testimony, that he whom we now mourn over was deeply conscious of his own sin and unworthiness, and hoped only for mercy from God. I allude to his frequent and most fervent quotation of the words "God be

* I purposely use this word, as it would seem to include both the imputation and impartation of the righteousness of Christ to our souls for their salvation.

merciful to me a sinner," which he also himself selected as the sole epitaph for his grave. As you read this simple inscription, my brethren, in years to come, may this thought rise in your heart, — that he who was so zealous for the Church of Christ, was also deeply conscious of his own need of an atoning Saviour.*

I would ask, then, was not your Vicar truly evangelical in death as in life? Was not what is commonly understood by the hope of the gospel, the sure and stedfast anchor of his soul?

But, then, with this simple and heartfelt expression of dependence upon Christ, he combined other views which some have thought, if not actually inconsistent with, at least not naturally allied to, such evangelical reliance,

* As a further proof and instance of his deep sense of personal unworthiness, I may record the following characteristic incident: — When his children were brought, one by one, in mournful procession, to his bed-side to receive a father's last blessing, he laid his hands upon the head of his eldest boy, and thus commenced his benediction, — "Stafford Majendie, thou art called after a poor sinner on earth, and a saint in heaven." Need I add that the "poor sinner" alluded to was none other than himself? By the "saint in heaven," he intended the Rev. George Majendie, his intimate and valued friend, whom God was pleased to take to his rest in 1842.

though, to my brother's mind, such alliance was not only natural, but strictly necessary in the appointment of God. He knew nothing of an abstract dependence upon Christ, or an interest in His precious merits, apart from the fact of being a member incorporate of His mystical body which is the Church. Christian and Churchman were, in his view, words of one and the same import.

Thus, then, to the strongest expressions of trust in his Saviour, he added others equally strong, and testifying his faith in, and appreciation of, what, for the sake of being understood, I may term those doctrines and practices, which have always, from the first days of the Reformation until now, distinguished those amongst us, who are most anxious to conform themselves to the mind and teaching of the Church.

And, first, I would record a very striking declaration of his faith and ecclesiastical position, which he made in pious imitation of several holy men and bishops of our later Church, especially the saintly bishop and confessor Ken, whose primitive and loving piety had a great charm for my brother's kindred spirit. After

this holy example,* then, he exclaimed "I die in the faith of Christ; a most unworthy member and minister of the Catholic Church of England." "The faith of Christ," you see, my brethren, he regarded as his profession, and "the Catholic Church of England" as the sacred enclosure, the fold, the vineyard in which it was to be, — I should say *had* been exercised to the saving of his soul.

And I am glad in being able, as it were by an accident, here to add his own view and explanation of the expression "the faith of Christ." Amongst the many directions which he gave to his beloved wife for the nurture and

* Bishop Ken's exact words, as quoted by Mr. Lathbury in his *History of the Nonjurors*, pp. 225—6, are as follows:—"As for my religion, I die in the Holy Catholic and Apostolic faith, professed by the whole Church before the disunion of East and West: more particularly I die in the communion of the Church of England, as it stands distinguished from all papal and puritan innovations, and as it adheres to the doctrine of the cross."

I hope I shall not do wrong in here respectfully mentioning, what is interesting in itself, and especially so, as an evidence of the fatherly and judicious care of our revered Bishop over one of his clergy; namely, that when he appointed my brother to Westbury, he called his attention to Bishop Ken's "Practice of Divine Love." I cannot forbear reminding you that your Vicar now as always faithfully obeyed the "godly admonition" of his Bishop.

admonition of their children, he very earnestly and emphatically exhorted and begged, that they should be brought up "*stedfast in the faith.*" And then he went on to explain that, by "the faith," he meant "the vows of their Baptism:" those vows which he himself, like a good soldier of Christ, humbly gloried in repeating so often, and which, like a wise householder, he caused to be transcribed, and hung up, on the walls of all his chambers. The hearty renunciation of the devil, the world, and the flesh; the belief of God's revelation as condensed in the Apostle's creed, and the promise of life-long obedience to the Divine commandments, were what, to my brother's mind, constituted that "faith" so extolled by Scripture and the Church, as the hand of the soul, by which we are justified, sanctified, and saved. And, as further indicating, that he understood by the complex term "faith," the whole doctrinal and practical system of the "Catholic Church," I may add that he repeated with frequency and great stress, that word of Scripture in which he, in company with all zealous sons of the Church, ever delighted, "*One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.*"

I may next mention that he received the blessed sacrament of the Lord's Body and Blood, as his spiritual meat and drink, for the journey he was about to take. In this particular, there is still, blessed be God, general attention paid to the commandment of Christ and His Church, so that I need not comment upon it.

There is another point to which obedience is not so common, but which my brother attended to with special dutifulness. I allude to the use of "the Commendatory prayer for a sick person at the point of departure." After he had received the blessed sacrament, as though "to fulfil all righteousness," my beloved brother called for the Church's last prayer; and being the only minister present, I read it, as I had before performed the Holy Communion. Alas! little did I ever think that these lips and hands would one day be forced to minister to these their own most awful necessities!

I need hardly tell you, that much of the little time that remained was occupied in the most devout prayer and praise. But, as bearing immediately upon my present purpose, I must expressly inform you, that the words of his

soul's last devotions and aspirations, were supplied by the Scriptures of God, and the Liturgy of His Church.

The Bible and the Prayer Book were the Dispensary in which my brother sought from Christ, the great physician, cordials and anodynes, — wine and oil — against all faintings, and pains of spirit: they were the united armoury from which his familiar hand took down weapons (proved trusty in many a conflict before,) wherewith to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one, and the perhaps still more formidable, because more subtle, assaults of the tender affections of human nature. At such a crisis he trusted not to medicines of his own preparing, or to weapons of his own manufacture: I mean that he did not use (though he was the last to condemn those who would) extemporary prayer, but rather chose such as Christ in His Word, and in His Church, had taught him.

From various parts of the Bible and the Prayer Book did he continually dart forth pious ejaculations to the God and Saviour of his soul. And *very* frequent use, especially toward the awful last, was made of that prayer of unfa-

athomable depth, which the Saviour Himself has taught us, and which the Church would have us so often repeat. I cannot tell the number of times that he repeated it; and he certainly departed from us, as it were only reverently venturing to approach his Lord with that Lord's own divine words upon his lips. Especially did he lay most fervent and reiterated emphasis upon the words "for ever and ever," as though (to quote the striking suggestion of a bystander) "he felt that eternity had just begun." Thus the Lord's Prayer, which before had been a portion of his daily sustenance, — the wholesome, nutritious, simple, unstimulating bread of life, — now, in the hour of death, when he was *evidently* so hungering and thirsting after righteousness, filled and satisfied his soul "with good things, making it young and lusty as an eagle" for his upward flight.

It was the first prayer that he had lisped in childhood, and it was the last that he now muttered and stammered forth in the weakness, I do not say in the agony, for that in mercy was spared him, but in the weakness of death. Thus the child and the man, his cradle and his grave, were "bound each to each by natural

piety." I entreat you, my brethren, to remember this experience; and may it incline you to teach your little ones, and use yourselves, with stronger faith, and deeper fervency, and greater frequency, that prayer of our Lord, which was so dearly prized, and so "mighty in operation," at the death of this saint!

As a last point of evidence, I would mention the sense of value which my brother expressed for the daily services of the Church. You are of course aware, that those services which are but too commonly used on Sunday only, are, in our Prayer Book, entitled "The order for morning and evening prayer *DAILY throughout the year.*" In this, as in other things, your lamented Vicar revered and acted up to the bidding of the Church. For a long time it had been his regular habit to perform the whole service twice daily in his house; and latterly, as you know, he has, with rejoicings of heart, transferred one of these services to the House of God. The change afforded him infinite comfort and satisfaction, as also did the presence of the "two or three," clergy and small flock who gathered together with him; and as I began by saying, he, at the last, testified to the great

value and blessedness of the daily service, and expressed a most earnest longing that it might be continued among you, for the honour of God, and the spiritual benefit of his beloved people.*

And here I would observe generally, that it has never been my lot to know any one who set more value upon what are termed the forms of religion, (whether the sacraments and sacramental ordinances for the conveyance of pardon and grace, or figurative and emblematical signs, such as the cross in Baptism, and the literal acceptance of St. Paul's words that, "at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow,") and yet one to whom the invidious title of a *formalist* could with less justice be applied.

Without exaggeration might it be said of him, that he saw Christ in everything, and everything in Christ. He ever combined the "spirit" with the "letter," and therefore he received abundant life from the Lord of life, in the habitual, and most reverential use, of the solemn forms and formularies of our holy faith.

And here I am further reminded of the peculiar delight which he always took in what is

* See Appendix at the end.

technically called the "objective"* view of religion, though, as this letter alone proves, he by no means undervalued its "subjective" use. I here use the term "objective" with especial reference to the devout contemplation and application of the facts and histories recorded in Holy Scripture, particularly of all that relates to our adorable Lord. In this most spiritual and fruitful exercise, my beloved brother took peculiar delight. A beautiful, and very characteristic instance, occurred very soon after he became assured of his approaching departure from us. With that collected calmness which God had, in such merciful abundance, shed over him, he exclaimed, "I die about the time of life that the Lord Jesus died."

His mind was stored with Scripture, and I do believe that the *facts* of Scripture were uppermost in that store; and so he was here, in his extremity, supplied with a singularly apt

* Were I to attempt a popular explanation of these terms I fear I should fail. So I am contented to remind the thoughtful reader of a very valuable illustration of them in a book one is always glad to refer to, Dr. Mill's *Sermons on the Temptation of our Lord*, pp. 1—7. The same subject is also treated, though of course, not in the same way, in Archdeacon Hare's *Victory of Faith*. — See Sermon iii.

ground of humble consolation and thankfulness. He ever remembered that he was “predestinated to be conformed to the image of God’s Son;” and to be made like Him, even to *appear* like Him, in the least respect, was to him a ground of providentially appointed joy.

And now, having discussed your beloved Vicar’s views, — having set them forth fresh from his own lips, without concealment or exaggeration, — it is, perhaps desirable to add a word with regard to his experience, I mean his experimental sense of their power and value. I doubt not you are already, my brethren, aware, from what you would naturally expect in such a case, from general report, and especially from Mr. Fane’s sermon, that, in my brother’s last hours, those who best loved him seemed at a loss how to pray for any *addition* to his consolation and joy, so fully did his Heavenly Father not only know but also supply what things he had need of before we asked Him. But still, in order to complete the object of my letter, and trusting that they may not be irksome to you, I will add a few words on this subject.

As with the characters of men, so also with the doctrines and principles by which they are

formed, "ye shall know them by their fruits;" and ripe, beautiful, and abundant indeed, were those "fruits of the spirit," even "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," which clustered upon this branch of Christ the true vine.

There was no symptom of any room for what I may term *doctrinal* repentance. CHRIST IN HIS CHURCH had been all his hope in life: CHRIST IN HIS CHURCH was all his joy in death. He had not leant upon a bruised reed, which now, under the unusual pressure and weight of death, gave way, and pierced him. He had not built his house upon the sand, so that, when the waves and wind of nature's last storm beat upon it, it fell. He had not chosen "a lantern unto his feet, and a light unto his paths," when passing over the plains of life, whose flickering earth-lit flame was not bright enough to dissipate the darkness, or strong enough to resist the noxious damps of the valley of death. Oh! no. What served him in life, served him in death. What justified, sanctified, and glorified him on earth, bore him in triumph on its wings to Heaven. He had been enabled to *do* the will of God, by faith in Christ, formed, exercised, and perfected,

by the help, and under the fostering wing of "the Catholic Church of England;" and now his soul *knew*, — experienced, realized, — that this doctrine is of God. The religion of the Prayer Book was, beyond all controversy, by its blessed effects, proved to be the religion of the Bible; the religion of God; the "will" the "commandment" of God; "the power of God" and "the wisdom of God;" "the power of God unto salvation;" "the power of an endless life!" (1 Cor. i. 24.; Rom. i. 16.; Heb. vii. 16.)

During his last hours he was mercifully gifted with most perfect resignation, most placid composure, and, to use his own expression which includes all, most "blessed peace." Into that nature, to the exquisite tenderness of which, you brethren, amongst whom he ministered, can bear witness, there was thrown an element of supernatural strength. To us who knew the sensitiveness of the man, there was evidently help vouchsafed of no ordinary kind and measure; and we doubt not, if the veil which hides from us, — from the living, though, perhaps, not from the dying, — the invisible world, had been drawn aside, we might have beheld our beloved one encircled and upheld

with the everlasting arms,—the all-powerful yet tender arms of his Lord Jesus.

His calmness and fortitude were wonderful. He who would have wept out his heart for others in such sorrow, wept not for himself. The sight of wife and children and brother, and the thought of that beloved flock from all of which he was about to depart for “a little while,” drew no tear from his eye, no sigh from his bosom, no expression of lingering regret from his lips. Nature was swallowed up in Gaze: Christ was all and in all: he was Christ’s as Christ is God’s!

Before quitting this part of the subject it may be interesting and profitable to lay before you yet one more of your Vicar’s last words.

Soon after being assured that the hour of his departure was at hand, he requested that he might not be “excited.” In his approaching conflict with the king of terrors he feared lest his faith might be shaken, and his thoughts distracted from glory to come; and the honour of his Saviour, Who had undertaken for him, sullied by his *human* weakness being unduly acted upon and moved, by the noise and bustle, or harrowing but well-meant, conduct of the bystanders.

It is said of the illustrious Roman, Julius Cæsar, that, at his assassination, he drew his robe closely around him, and covered his face with its folds, that he might die with that dignity, and freedom from exposure, becoming so great a man. What the heathen does for his body, the Christian does also, and chiefly for his soul: that truth which was only shadowed forth in Roman story, we find realized in substance at the death which we are now contemplating.

A great, because a good, man is about to depart from the scene of his earthly labours, conflicts, sorrows, and joys; and he is anxious to set his house in order. He will not have a thing out of its place: all must be arranged with the utmost precision and propriety, and that at once too, for his Lord is coming; yea, is already heard knocking at the door. Therefore, at such a crisis, was my saintly brother earnestly desirous, that when his Lord came, He might find every thought and feeling of human nature, brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ; and so he begged to be preserved from excitement. And, we doubt not, that which was expressed as a wish to us, ascended

in the form of a devout prayer to God ; and the wish was scrupulously attended to, and the prayer was mercifully answered. And your Vicar continued to the last, through God's powerful mercy, *calm* as regenerated infancy sleeping on a mother's breast, *still* as a treasure-ship, just returned from her long and perilous voyage, about to drop anchor in some summer bay !

I think, dear brethren, it may be important to attend to this. Sometimes it is even attempted to produce excitement in the dying and in those around ; and, still oftener, sufficient care is not taken to keep it away, for surely it *should* be away ; surely it is here out of time, and out of place. Even regarding excitement in a favourable point of view, its value only consists in being a stimulant to repentance and obedience. But this is hardly the work for the death-bed of a saint. He *has*, through the blood of Christ, purged his conscience from dead works ; he *has* fought the good fight ; he *has* kept the faith.

But, moreover, excitement is dangerous, and to be viewed with suspicion at all times. It is a dizzy and a slippery height, from which we

may rise or *may* fall greatly ; and, therefore, such a spot of danger should, by those who desire to “walk circumspectly,” to “take heed lest they fall,” be scrupulously avoided at so critical a time as that of death,—the soul’s last hour of trial, and therefore that in which Satan would seem most desirous to have us. And oh ! brethren, how awful would be the least fall, or slip, or faltering step, at such a time ! Infirmities might then become sins, without time and place for repentance ! What is then done might never be undone ; a lameness contracted then might cause a halt for ever !

So, again, men behave differently, are grave or restrained, or light and at their ease, according to the company in which they are. And who is in the death-room of the saint ? The Father is there, the Son is there, and the Holy Ghost is there. There, too, are the holy angels on ministries of love, wondering in breathless admiration at the faith of the dying man, and desiring to look into those mysteries of redemption, by which he, who was once a child of wrath, is now become an heir of glory. A spot with such visitants is surely a “dreadful place,” a place for silence, and stillness, and modesty,

and awe! Therefore there should be no hurrying to and fro, no noise and bustle, no inquisitive intrusion of strangers, no useless talk, no importunate offers of services, well-meant but vain, irksome and disturbing; above all, no allusions to circumstances likely to vex, and harass the human breast. Consistently with this all may be done that needs. The solemn and low voice of God's minister in prayer and sacrament, and the still more subdued response of the people, the quiet, unobtrusive performance of necessary offices, the tear that will trickle down, and the sob that refuses to be altogether stifled, these, I say, will neither excite the dying man, nor offend the present Majesty of Heaven, and the heavenly hosts.

Pardon me, my brethren, what may have the appearance of a digression; and before I close allow me to speak to you a brief word of affectionate exhortation, though I cannot hope in effect to add any thing to that which has been addressed to you by Mr. Fane.

If you really loved and respected your Vicar (and I am sure you did) show forth and prove those laudable feelings by treasuring up his precepts and example, his words and his works;

and be not satisfied with merely committing them to paper or to memory, but, moreover, pray that the Lord may be pleased to write them, with His own finger, upon "the fleshy tables of your hearts." So shall you learn to value, to love, and to act up to them, not only because they were spoken and wrought by one who was content to spend and be spent for you, but also for their own sakes, because of their own exceeding beauty and loveliness, because they are "grace and truth," "life and peace," and "joy for evermore." Remember that the voice which has spoken will never speak to you again, except, — I can scarce bring myself to write it, — except it be to condemn you at the last day, for not taking heed to its counsel. But you *will* take heed, brethren, I am assured: you will still hearken to your Vicar's voice in the echoes of the past, whose tones will be as echoes ever are, — doubly sweet and precious.

So too, if you sorrow for your beloved Pastor, — and, I believe, there are few hearts among you to whom this day is not one of trouble, — prove the depth and genuineness of your grief, prove that it is a "*godly* sorrow," by mourning over your manifold sins, negligences, and igno-

rances, to humble you on account of which, and to draw you effectually to Christ for their pardon and healing, was the wish uppermost in your Vicar's breast. "Rend your heart and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God; turn unto Him in your heart and in your chamber, in the weekly and daily services and the Sacraments of the Church, and in tender care, and self-denying alms, for the poor. So too, if you are thankful to God, Who has permitted you for awhile to rejoice in His servant's light, and to our revered Bishop, by whose wise and most providential choice he was appointed to minister unto you, then, I humbly suggest, exhibit and prove this gratitude, by filial love and obedience to that "Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood," as well as to her Bishop in these parts, to both of whom your Vicar was so devoted.

And yet once more, and I have done. If you admired his character, and his conduct, if the various points of Christian temper and bearing, which God had wrought in him, deserved and won your praise, show forth your praise to that God Who is the only proper object of it, not only with your lips, but in your

lives. - Follow him as he followed Christ; and remember that in doing so, you "must take up your cross." He bore *his*, by God's grace, unflinchingly, uncomplainingly, yea, rejoicingly, as ye all know. His religion was not negative, partial, fitful, self-indulgent, or his death would not have been peaceful, and triumphant, as it was. He found the way to Heaven strait and steep, and he walked therein with God, not attempting to make it broad and easy. In the exercise of his body and the affections of his heart, in the energies and activities of his mind, in the expenditure of his money, in the expenditure of his time, by night and by day, in summer and in winter, in heat and in cold, "Sunday and week-day, Fast-day and Festival," in joy and in sorrow, in the recreations he allowed himself with so scrupulous and sparing a hand, in society and in his family, in life and in death, up "to his power, yea, and beyond his power," did God enable your beloved Vicar, to give up himself unto Him, with a most intense and single devotion.

Go, my dear brethren, and in the same "Catholic Church of England," with and to the glory of the same God, the Father, the Son,

and the Holy Ghost, "go and do ye likewise." Live as he lived, and then, and *only* then, so shall ye also die!

In conclusion, allow me to assure you, how deeply my beloved brother appreciated and thanked God for the co-operation, kindness, and sympathy which he experienced among you; and also, that I am sure, that there is no tribute which you can pay to his memory which would afford him more sincere joy, than the continuance, and increase, of the same conduct and feelings, to the clergyman, *whoever* he may be, whom the wisdom of your Bishop, under the guidance of the great ever-present Head of the Church, sees good to appoint in his place.

And, begging your fervent and effectual prayers for the widow and the fatherless, and assuring you, that, wherever they are, they will always care for, love, and plead for at the throne of Grace, that flock which their beloved husband and father so "greatly longed after in the bowels of Jesus Christ,"

Believe me to remain,

My dear Brethren,

Your faithful Friend and Servant,

MEREDITH BROWN.

Chittoe, May 17th, 1847.

ST. JOHN, xi. 25.

"I am the resurrection and the life."

Unchang'd that voice — and though not yet
The dead sit up and speak,
Answering its call ; we gladlier rest
Our darlings on earth's quiet breast,
And our hearts feel they must not break.

Far better they should sleep awhile
Within the church's shade,
Nor wake, until new heaven, new earth,
Meet for their new immortal birth,
For their abiding-place be made,

Than wander back to life, and lean
On our frail love once more :
'Tis sweet, as year by year we lose
Friends out of sight, in faith to muse
How grows in Paradise our store.

Then pass, ye mourners, cheerly on,
Through prayer unto the tomb ;
Still, as ye watch life's falling leaf,
Gathering from every loss and grief
Hope of new spring and endless home :

Then cheerly to your work again
With hearts new brac'd and set
To run, untir'd, love's blessed race,
As meet for those, who face to face
Over the grave their Lord have met.

The Christian Year.



APPENDIX.

I AM sure I shall be conferring a holy pleasure upon my readers, and I trust doing some service to the Church, by here appending a letter which my revered brother addressed to his "dear parishioners" upon the subject of Daily Prayer, when he purposed commencing to offer it among them. It is a fair specimen of his affectionate, pious, and catholic mode of teaching and dealing with his flock. Moreover, it will be specially precious to some of them, and interesting to all, as being the *last* word which he addressed to them in print, and that only a few weeks, as will be seen from the date of the letter, before his hand was still in death, to write no more again for ever.

If he is now permitted to survey the works which his Saviour prompted and enabled him to do, I doubt not that his spirit rejoices, that an attempt to revive the sacrifice of prayer and praise in the courts of the Lord's House, day by day continually, was one of the very *last*. I cannot forbear adding, upon the same

supposition, that I am sure that joy is increased by the very gratifying circumstance, that his successor, (whose praise is in the mouths of so many of the brethren,) has determined, with God's help, to carry on that good work which *he* was permitted to begin.

"MY DEAR PARISHIONERS,

"There will be Divine Service at the Parish Church every week-day morning at ten o'clock, besides the usual evening service. I and my good curates propose with the Divine help, (without which we can do nothing,) to go there,—to humble ourselves with you on account of our sins, and to implore the mercy of God through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, —to praise God with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,—and to receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save our souls. I entreat you, each and all, to consider how far you can unite with us in this solemn and edifying devotion. You will acknowledge the comfort which you have derived from the services on Sunday; and, believe me, you would derive the same from those in the week, multiplied by the number of times which you attended. Time so spent would be in nowise lost, but most surely gained. As churchmen you will

feel that the time of Lent is most suitable to humiliation on account of our own sins, and those of others, and for seeking grace to prepare us for the joyful communion at Easter. And as Englishmen you acknowledge the desirableness of drawing near, at this period of national suffering, to the Throne of Grace, in the name of our Lord Jesus, with especial humiliation, supplication, and intercession, that God would be pleased to avert the evils of want, with which great portions of the British empire are already affected, and the whole of it threatened.

“ I know that you all cannot come to church in the week, dear brethren ; but this is no reason why those should not come who can. Nor can many of you, perhaps, attend always ; but let not this be an excuse for not attending at other times when you are able. You cannot have more engagements to interfere with your coming than the clergy have ; and such difficulties will vanish before an earnest faith and spiritual resolution. I therefore beseech you to reflect and to act conscientiously in this matter, and may the Lord give you and me a right understanding in all things. By coming whenever you can to pray with us, and encouraging others to come, you will be effectuating our Lord’s will that His Father’s house should be called “ a house of prayer.” (Matt. xxi. 13.) And you will imitate the conduct of the inspired Apostles, who “ were continually in the temple praising and

blessing God," (Luke xxiv. 53,) and "daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus Christ." (Acts v. 42.)

"I am,

"Your most humble faithful Pastor,

"STAFFORD BROWN,

"Vicar of Westbury, Wilts."

"*Shrove Tuesday*, 1847."

(*Second Edition.*) CHITTOE, JULY 25, 1847.

The End.

